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ABSTRACT

Radio's "Golden Age," the 1930s and 1940s produced numerous successful and profitable daytime serials, called "soap operas" because they were most often sponsored by firms selling laundry products. Among the most popular of these series were those produced by the team of Anne and Frank Hummert. Working through the Blackett-Sample-Hummert advertising agency, the Hummerts produced 46% of the soap operas introduced between 1932 and 1937, and 30% of those created between 1937 and 1942. Chief among their programs were "Ma Perkins," "Young Widder Brown," "Stella Dallas," "Our Gal Sunday," and "The Romance of Helen Trent." The Hummert formula for success was straight forward and easy to follow--characters were human and lovable, their actions were logical, consistent, believable, and painted against a canvas of simple, everyday life. The Hummert soap operas invariably had strong, assertive heroines, and one of two types of strong men--the patriarch or the villain. The heroines were sexually naive, recognized the threat of extra-marital sex, and never permitted themselves an "easy" escape from marriage through divorce. They were, in short, admirable role models for a generation of women who survived the Great Depression and World War II. (FL)

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WOMEN IN RADIO SOAP OPERAS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE IMAGE OF WOMEN'S "SPHERE" IN THE "GOLDEN AGE"

Session Title: Women and Soap Opera

Session date and Time: Wednesday, August 10, 1983, 8:00-9:30 a.m.
Minneapolis Hyatt Hotel, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Presented at the: Annual Conference of the American Theatre Association

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Social historians and feminist scholars have neglected the study of radio's "Golden Age," the 1930s and 1940s; decades of prolific profitable and ever so successful daytime serials broadcast to approximately twenty million women who were regular purchasers of soap.[1] The serials as a popular "art form" are known as "soap operas," "washboard weepers," and "sudzy dramas."

Soap operas were designed to bring "vicarious romance and adventure" to American women "presumably bored with the routine of housekeeping," or told them grim, gruesome and tragic tales of adultery, alcoholism, arson, assorted sin, greed, hopeless domestic situations, insanity, psychosomatic illness, jealousy, murder, suicide and any and all deviations from the ten commandments.[2]

In the 1930s radio evolved into a major medium of entertainment and within two decades Americans spent "more leisure hours listening to the radio than in anything else--except sleeping."[3] This theater of the imagination also developed a national homogeneity of thought, taste and preference with a national constituency for its programs, personnel and advertised products. By revolutionizing American society, it created a new segregation; broadcaster and listener were separated in distance and later, with delayed broadcasts, in time.

Time and spatial distancing from broadcaster to listener should be neither over-emphasized nor under-emphasized. It did, however, create a new segregation; the listener could be alone anywhere with the broadcast voice. Entertainment and information

was not necessarily shared as a public or collective endeavor but as a private or individual activity.

American radio was also the product of American business; according to the president of the National Association of Broadcasters, radio was "as much that kind of product as the vacuum cleaner, the washing machine, the automobile, and the airplane...."[4] Radio also mirrored American society and sometimes presented a distorted reflection; from this distorted reality audiences drew their self-images and aspirations.

Women in the 1930s and 1940s drew upon soap operas, movies and contemporary literature in shaping their image and defining women's sphere. Radio's daytime serials, broadcast in a fifteen minute time slot, Monday through Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. outlined, defined and delineated the continuing sagas of soapworld, women's domain and women's world.[5]

Women, insulated and isolated in their home-making activities were a unique media audience; unsophisticated and traditional in belief and practice. Soap operas were successful because the world they created was believable, relevant and important to their audience. As "products of a bourgeois culture" they were "stylized glimpses into the dramatic potentials of living." One critic believes that they were "educative models" in a "commercial democracy" which "disseminated the conservative message necessary for a society to stay together."[6]

The conservative message was reinforced by demographics and economics limiting and encompassing women's employment opportunities outside the domestic sphere of home, family,

husband and children. In 1930, the leading occupation for women workers was domestic and personal servants; in 1940, private family servants; in 1950, stenographers, typists and secretaries. Women were 22% of the total labor force in 1930; 25% in 1940 and 29% in 1950. In 1930 women workers were 12% of the married female population; in 1940, 17% of the married female population; and in 1950, 25% of the married female population.[7]

Such men as David Sarnoff at the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and William Paley at the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) may have dominated the radio industry, but their male dominance of America's airwaves was not unchallenged. Three remarkable women; Elaine Carrington, Anne Hummert (with her husband Frank) and Irna Phillips dominated daytime radio programming with their writing and production of "soap operas" in the 1930s and 1940s.[8] Carrington, Hummert and Phillips thus had a unique opportunity to define and shape the image of American womanhood and to define her sphere of activity.[9]

This discussion will deal only with those soap operas produced by Anne Hummert and Frank Hummert.[10] Both worked at the Blackett-Sample-Hummert (B-S-H) advertising agency.[11] When sponsors employed advertising agencies to produce their shows, B-S-H became one of the major employers of actors, singers, directors, writers and show business professionals. In 1933, the Hummert production team introduced five soaps; in 1935, four new serials and in 1936, four more. Between 1932-37 they produced 46% of radio's soaps and 30% of those introduced between 1937-42.[12] In January 1944, the Hummerts left B-S-H and established

Hummert Radio Productions (formerly Air Features).[13] As late as 1951-1952, the Hummerts introduced a dozen new serials to network production.[14]

Among the more notable of the Hummert serials were: "Ma Perkins," (1937-1960); "Betty and Bob," (1932-1939); "Young Widder Brown," (1938-1955); "Stella Dallas," (1937-1955); "Our Gal Sunday," (1937-1958) and "The Romance of Helen Trent," (1933-1960).[15] The unifying factor for their starring characters was that the "agonies of Hummert heroines was seldom of their own making," but were "the result of circumstances beyond their control, such as swindlers, pettifogging lawyers and acts of God."[16] Anne once gave a male script writer the following advice: "the silence throbs. . . the empty hours are endless . . . then a friend in need is brought into the room by the turning of a dial . . . misery loves company . . . ." She then added, "worry for women is entertainment."[17]

The Hummert formula for soap opera success was straightforward and easy to follow; characters were "human and lovable, their actions ". . . logical, consistent and believable and painted against the canvas of simple, everyday life." Frank described their scripts as being "success stories of the unsuccessful" and Anne reviewed their history:

> Nobody can understand the phenomenal success of the soaps without knowing when they were born. It was during the Depression. There was no Social Security, no welfare, nothing. The housewife was at home worrying about everything. Would her husband lose his job? Where was the family's next meal to come from? They found escape in the lives of the people on the soaps.[18]

"Betty and Bob," the Hummerts' third serial and first network dramatization, was broadcast October 10, 1932. As a

romantic melodrama, carefully written, "Betty and Bob" may have changed the history of daytime radio; it had everything, a love story, deceit and distrust, the all important factors of suspense and drama. Bob's portrayal by actor Don Ameche enabled him to become one of radio's greatest matinee idols.[19]

Although "Betty and Bob" quarrelled almost incessantly, the audience would not tolerate their immature jealousies when they had a baby. Children apparently endowed the couple with the mystical attributes of parenthood thereby necessitating maturity and family stability. Imperfect parenthood, <u>especially</u> imperfect motherhood, led to the soap opera's demise in 1939.

Thus, no ambivalence in Hummert soap opera characters could exist. The Hummert maxim, based upon the "Betty and Bob" experience, was soon enshrined by dialoguers and writers; that no mother could be bad, no mother could be domineering, or in feminist linguistics, too assertive. No gradations were permitted; "if a woman is evil, she must be wholly evil."[20] With a predominately female audience, the majority of whom were mothers, no motherhood was far better than imperfect motherhood.

Hummert heroines did not have to be mothers or wives, they could be widows; "Young Widder Brown" is such an example. Again, its emphasis was traditional values--homemaking and family responsibilities--with a female head of household. Although the Widow Brown was a strong woman, a matriarch, the plot line could degenerate when she developed "hysterical blindness" resulting from an unfortunate allergy to chocolate cake.

"Stella Dallas," one of the Hummerts' most popular soap operas, had a more compelling story line. To the musical themes

of "How Can I Leave Thee" and "Memories" (six weeks), "Stella Dallas" dramatized "the sacrificial nature and sheer resourcefulness of the all-American mother." Broadcast historian, Raymond Wiliam Stedman, described it as an "afternoon drama for the poor and forgotten and anyone else who could accept Amazonian heroics."[21] A feminist might regard Stedman's critique as sexist in condemning the heroism of American mothers during the national crisis of the 1930s.

More significantly, "Stella Dallas" reinforced existing folklore and class consciousness that the poor very often possess virtues that the rich do not. The heroine, Stella, an unsophisticated lower class woman, guided the wealthy back to righteousness by her beliefs and example. It may have been a comforting thought to millions of American women living in the Great Depression.

Sunday was another important Hummert heroine. Who has forgotten the manner in which "Our Gal Sunday" realized the American Dream of riches and opportunity as "an orphan girl named Sunday . . . from the little mining town of Silver Creek, Colorado, who in young womanhood, married England's richest, most handsome lord . . . Lord Henry Brinthrope." To the theme song, "Red River Valley," the story asked the seemingly eternal question, "Can this girl from a little mining town in the West find happiness as the wife of a titled Englishman?" Anne Hummert said that she wrote the eternal question.[22]

The eternal question was never resolved. True, Sunday may have married above her class, but she was indomitable in her

prudence, wisdom and "true grit." She was a real person in a world of wealth, glamor and phonies. "Our Gal Sunday" was strong, courageous and possessed an innate sense of self-identity or personhood. Should Sunday lose her titled English lord, women knew "our gal" would survive leading a productive and interesting life.

Hummerts' most lasting soap opera was "Ma Perkins," (1937-1960). Though no longer Hummert owned, it was among the final seven CBS soap operas to leave radio after Thanksgiving 1960. The Hummert story line portrayed "Ma Perkins," as "a woman with a heart of gold and a world of common sense . . . and a philosophy of the Golden Rule . . . unselfish in her interest in individuals.

Another popular soap opera was the "Romance of Helen Trent," characterized by one critic as being "one of the brightest stars in the Hummert crown and at the same time one of the worst dramas inflicted upon an American radio audience." The daily introduction told the story of a thirty-five year old fashion designer who:

> when life mocks her, breaks her hopes, dashes her against the rocks of despair, fights back bravely, successfully, to prove what so many women long to prove in their own lives: that because a women is thirty-five or more, romance in life need not be over, that the romance of life can extend into middle life, and even beyond.[24]

To compensate for her age, the middle-aged heroine had a successful career, independence, charming acquaintances, modest wealth and numerous impassioned suitors. Helen's long time radio suitor, Gil Whitney, portrayed by David Gothard, revealed the male point of view about the heroine's lack of interest in sex by remarking that Helen was the object of all the romantic frenzy

"for no damn good reason at all." In its twenty-seven year broadcast history, (1933-1960), Helen had 25 major suitors, numerous minor love interests, all of them wealthy, even billionaires, one psychotic and one gangster; the latter hastily removed by the protests of letter writers.[25]

Radio and theatre critic, Gilbert Millstein wrote a New Times essay entitled, "Helen Trent--Chapter 5,900," summarizing Helen's moral principles and the sexless nature of her romantic pursuit; she:

> ...neither drinks, smokes, takes snuff, nor despite her professional pratling after love and her fine state of physical preservation (on the fact of it, something like the petrified redwood), nor permits her pursuers any but the most antiseptic advances and she has evaded the altar with a cunning born of the desperation of scriptwriters.[26]

In mathematical terms, the story line was no more than the "melting of one triangle into another, with Helen as the constant apex." Contrast Helen's strengths with those of her admirers: "Helen surmounts all, is strong, kind and sweet and Lord knows what else that a man should be. Her admirers may be rich, but they are also inconsistent, unexpectedly weak when they are not downright passive, querulous and untrustworthy."[27]

Specifically, it was no accident that the radio serials, notably the Hummert produced soap operas, included large numbers of weak, passive, unaggressive, emotional, dependent, submissive and unreliable men. Husbands and lovers were frequently afflicted with crippling diseases or injury affecting their lower extremities. James Thurber in his 1948 The Beast and Other Animals referred to the man in the wheel chair as being the standard soap opera "symbol of the American male's subordination

to the female and his dependence on her great strength of heart and soul." Another critic suggested that "impotency, manifested in the general weakness of many male characters, in their tendency to be absent in times of need and in strange illnesses and crippling accidents that struck them, perhaps was more than happenstance." What better way for women to incapacitate the male head-of-household thereby rendering him as dependent upon his wife as she was dependent upon him socially and economically?[28]

What we see in radio soap operas is a reversal of the traditional male-female stereotypes; the men are passive and weak and have to be loved and protected by strong determined women. Helen's constant rejection of her suitors was a choice that the average American woman did not possess. "Romance" to women, has always differed in meaning from "romance" to men. Romance, for women, can be idealized without the intrusion of predictable, perhaps mundane, marital sex.

These and other topics provoked criticism in the 1930s and 1940s. Implicit in much of the criticism of the soap operas was the conviction that American women were neglecting their homemaking and maternal dutites in order to follow the more exciting life episodes of "Our Gal Sunday," "Stella Dallas," "Romance of Helen Trent," and others.

Only those unfamiliar with women's home responsibilities could originate such an irresponsible condemnation. Women planned their schedules around the soap opera programming and could judge whether or not they were "early" or "late" in

completing the duties of bedmaking, dish washing, lunch and dinner preparation, child care, shopping and other numerous "household duties." Without servants, without funds for luxuries, lower and middle class women could complete homemaking "chores" or even relax in a chair without unnecessary feelings of guilt to listen to their favorite soaps.

Male scientific-medical theories and advice influenced American wives and mothers of the 1930s and 1940s. No one, perhaps, was more influential than Benjamin Spock, the medical guru of Depression and World War II mothers, who advised the periodic feeding of babies including those who were breast-fed. Thus, most women and mothers were up well before the 4:00 a.m. feeding. Soap operas, designed for the time period between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., may have permitted rural and urban women to rest and listen to their popular soap operas when their individual strengths--physical, mental and emotional--were at lowest ebb.

How long did the "Golden Age" radio serials survive? Quite long. Radio soap operas retained their substantial popularity until they were discontinued in the mid to late 50s. Why they survived into the age of television is another matter. Perhaps they survived because their heroines possessed almost super-human attributes of strength, compassion, competency, responsibility, intelligence, virtue, justice and common sense and that appeal was irrestible to America's female audience. Limited to such a homebound and exclusively female audience, the Hummert soaps explored the "new dimensions" of womanly attributes in a fantasy world that was non-threatening to the traditional values of the

audience or the society. Covertly, the image of an assertive woman, independent, and economically self-sufficient, the attributes usually associated with men, challenged the dominant American myths of male superiority and female inferiority.

What can we conclude from research? The irony that women have joined men in almost universally condemning soap operas. One 1940s female critic for example, disliked radio's daytime serials because they persuaded women that "falling in and out of love, solving personal problems," was the "end-all and be-all of a woman's life." Or that:

> Soaps tell us that the problems men have traditionally confronted, to succeed or fail, are unimportant, superficial, irrelevant to the central concerns of life. Satisfaction is simply not to be found by anyone in the traditionally masculine pursuits. Far from suggesting a double standard, or a division of life into male and female specialties, soaps utterly reject conventional masculine values in their place as the only desirable standard.

In conclusion, Hummert soap operas of the 1930s and 1940s:

1) had strong assertive, self-reliant heroines;

2) had only two rare types of strong men--the patriarch and the villain;

3) were sexually naive--Helen Trent and similar radio heroines "had a way of making a kiss seem like sexual excess,"

4) "recognized the threat of extra-marital sex and thus "crippled" men;

5) glorified the common sense and heroic sacrifices of wifes and mothers;

6) portrayed lower, middle and upper class women in real life situations, and;

7) never permitted an "easy" escape from marriage through divorce was eternal.

Although there is no "lesson of history," many Americans of the 1980s believe that, "the only life that can bring happiness is the life of the heart--of emotional commitment to other people." An analysis of 1930s and 1940s radio soap operas may challenge media and feminist stereotypes. This preliminary and selective examination of Hummert soap operas has led to the discovery of strong, assertive, self-reliant heroines; more than numerous and admirable role models for a generation of women who survived the Great Depression and the Second World War. In no small way, American women were encouraged in their fantasies to dream of unlimited female opportunity and perhaps to work toward such actualization individually and collectively.

NOTES

[1]Robert St. John, Encyclopedia of Radio and Television Broadcasting (Milwaukee: Cathedral Square Publishing Company, 1970), p. 63; Alan Havig, "Beyond Nostalgia: American Radio as a Field of Study," Journal of Popular Culture, XII, No. 2 (Fall, 1979), p. 223.

[2]St. John, Encyclopedia of Radio and Television Broadcasting, p. 64. William G. Werner, Proctor & Gamble Company's division of consumer information, stated that "to a woman tied down to home-keeping duties, without opportunity for outside diversion and amusement, many of these programs offer an important kind of mental release; that they transport housewife listeners, for the moment, to the sort of dream-and-romance world which gives them refreshment in mind and spirit they so often sorely need"; New York Times, February 17, 1944, p. 16. Proctor & Gamble (P&G) had net earnings of $511,668,000 in 1978; during the century of 1879-1979, American consumers purchased 30 billion bars of Ivory soap. In the "Golden Age" of radio (1930s and 1940s) several advertisers owned the daytime serials, bore all production costs and then sold or traded them to networks in return for advertising. P&G currently follows that practice; it owns and produces six of the 14 network television soaps and in 1980 spent $650 million promoting its 55 mostly home-care products; Sunday World-Herald (Omaha), November 11, 1979, p. 13E; Sunday World-Herald (Omaha), April 18, 1982, p. 29.

[3]J. Fred MacDonald, Don't Touch That Dial! Radio Programming in American Life, 1920-1960 (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1979), pp. 31, 38, 89, hereafter cited as Don't Touch That Dial; John W. Spalding, "1928: Radio Becomes a Mass Advertising Medium," in The Commercial

Connection: Advertising and the American Mass Media, ed. by John W. Wright (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1979), pp. 70-81.

4. MacDonald, Don't Touch That Dial!, p. 36.

5. I define the terms "image of women," "womanhood" and "sphere of activity" as follows: 1) "image of women" is sex role stereotyping in its purist form, shaped by media influences, simplistic, undimensional and "romantic" as opposed to the reality of a repetitive world of child care and housekeeping; 2) "womanhood" is the place of women in humanity, roles, duties and responsibilities, voluntary and involuntary, gender-based and reinforced by society; and 3) "sphere of activity" is defined in the traditional historical sense; men in primarily public, political, social and economic activities outside the home environment and women in primarily private, isolated home activities centered upon a husband and children. For more extensive information consult Matilda Butler and William Paisley, The Flawed Mirror, Sourcebook on Women and the Media (Washington, D.C.: Communications Press, 1977); Judith M. Bardwick and Elizabeth Douvan, "Ambivalence: The Socialization of Women," in Women in a Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness, ed. by Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 147-159.

6. MacDonald, Don't Touch That Dial!, p. 239. In a popular textbook the writer stated: "Women do an estimated eighty-five percent of the nation's shopping and hence are a most important category of the radio audience. Compared to men, women are more susceptible to political opinion and commercial suggestion, more intuitive, more prone to be identificationists, more subjective, guided more by inner perception, and more indulgent in fancy . . . . The major part of the

daytime audience is made up of women, who average about 3.0 hours per day and 2.9 hours per evening listening to their radios. Women under forty years of age spend an average of approximately 3.1 hours per day, and women over forty about 2.7 hours per day in radio listening"; Charles Hull Wolfe, Modern Radio Advertising (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1949), pp. 172-173.

7. Refer to Table 1 "Women Workers, 1910-1960" and Table 2 "The Leading Five Occupations of Women Workers, 1910-1960."

8. Nicholas H. Sharp, "Radio," in Concise Histories of American Popular Culture, ed. by M. Thomas Inge (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), pp. 308-312; Havig, "Beyond Nostalgia: American Radio as a Field of Study," Journal of Popular Culture, p. 223.

9. Jane Kutler and Patricia Kearney, Super Soaps: The Complete Book of Daytime Drama (New York: Grosset & Dunlop, 1977), pp. 3-5.

10. "There were hundreds of other soap operas not created by the Hummerts, but compared to the prodigious output of that couple the rest seem only a footnote"; Jim Harmon, The Great Radio Heroes (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), p. 174. The writer will draw upon her letter correspondence with Anne Hummert (Mrs. Frank Hummert) in 1976.

11. Trade journals, Printers Ink, Radio Daily and Advertising Age, contain business details concerning B-S-H; also New York Times, 1930-1950.

12. In the years 1936, 1937 and 1938, the advertising agency of Blackett-Sample-Hummert (B-S-H) placed the largest amount of business on the three networks, NBC, CBS and Mutual. Specifically, B-S-H purchased in 1938 nine million dollars worth of air time and dominated radio network broadcasting. The commission on this sale for B-S-H was

approximately $1,350,000; "Hummerts' Mill," Time, January 23, 1939, p. 30 and New York Times, January 12, 1939, p. 33.

13. Raymond William Stedman, The Serials: Suspense and Drama by Installment, 2nd ed. rev. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971, 1977), pp. 310, 372; hereafter cited as The Serials.

14. Ibid.

15. Frank Buxton and Bill Owen, The Big Broadcast, 1920-1950 (New York: Viking Press, 1972), p. 219. Hummert creativity and discipline were legendary in advertising and radio production. By 1939, the Hummerts were producing fifty serial scripts per week totalling 6,500,000 words a year. To maintain such production, they developed a rigid, hierarchial, standardized system with themselves at the top, twenty writers, six script readers or editors below and at the bottom of the pyramid, sixty clerical assistants. By hiring "dialogue writers" and not creators, the anonymous writers received only one-half, twelve dollars fifty cents, of the non-unionized script writers' minimum salary of twenty five dollars for a fifteen minute script; "Hummerts' Mill," Time, January 23, 1939, p. 30.

16. Thomas Whiteside, "Life Can Be Terrible," New Republic, July 14, 1947, p. 22.

17. Harmon, The Great Radio Heroes, p. 168.

18. Interview of Anne Ashenhurst Hummert with Robert Mertz, financial columnist of the New York Times, quoted in Robert Mertz, CBS - Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye (New York: Playboy Press, 1975), p. 80.

19. Stedman, The Serials, pp. 246, 248. Don Ameche later re-created the role in "The Bickersons."

20. Whiteside, "Life Can Be Terrible," New Republic, July 14, 1947, p. 22.

21. Stedman, The Serials, p. 313; Radio Daily, October 26, 1937, p. 5.

22. Buxton and Owen, The Big Broadcast, p. 182; Mertz, CBS - Reflections in a Bloodshot Eye, p. 82.

23. Radio Daily, August 5, 1937, p. 6; December 6, 1937, p. 8; April 22, 1941, p. 4 and Whiteside, "Life Can Be Terrible," New Republic, July 14, 1947, p. 20.

24. Stedman, The Serials, pp. 257-258; MacDonald, Don't Touch That Dial!, p. 246 and Radio Daily, August 18, 1941, pp. 1, 3.

25. Gilbert Millstein, "Helen Trent--Chapter 5,900," New York Times, July 15, 1956, VI, p. 16.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.; "Letters," New York Times, July 29, 1956, VI, p. 4.

28. Gilbert Seldes, The Great Audience (New York: Viking Press, 1950), p. 117; Stedman, The Serials, p. 346. For additional information see Lloyd Warner and William Henry, "The Radio Daytime Serial: A Symbolic Analysis," Genetic Psychology Monographs (February, 1948), pp. 3-71.

29. Madeleine Edmondson and Daniel Rounds, From Mary Noble to Mary Hartman: The Complete Soap Opera Book (New York: Stein & Day Publishers, 1976), pp. 239, 249.

30. Stedman, The Serials, p. 360.

Table 1

Women Workers, 1910-1960

Year	As % of Total Labor Force	As % Age of Female Population		Employed Married Women as % of Female Labor Force
		Total	Married	
1910	21	24	11	15
1920	20	23	9	23
1930	22	24	12	29
1940	25	27	17	36
1950	29	31	25	52
1960	33	35	32	60

Sources: Peter Gabriel Filene, Him/Her/Self: Sex Roles in Modern America, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, p. 241; U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1975 Handbook of Women Workers, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 9, 11, 17, 18.

Table 2

The Leading Five Occupations of Women Workers, 1910-1960
(in order of size, and as reported in each census regardless of changes in definition)

1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960
1) Other Servants	Other Servants	Other Servants, Other Domestic and Personal Service	Servants (private family)	Stenographers, Typists and Secretaries	Stenographers, Typists and Secretaries
2) Farm Laborers (home farm)	Teachers (school)	Teachers (school)	Stenographers, Typists and Secretaries	Other Clerical Workers	Other Clerical Workers
3) Laundresses (not in laundry)	Farm Laborers (home farm)	Stenographers and Typists	Teachers (not elsewhere classified)	Saleswomen	Private Household Workers
4) Teachers (school)	Stenographers and Typists	Other Clerks (except clerks in stores)	Clerical and Kindred Workers (not elsewhere classified)	Private Household Workers	Saleswomen
5) Dressmakers or Seamstresses (not in factory)	Other Clerks (except clerks in stores)	Saleswomen	Saleswomen (not elsehwere classified)	Teachers (elementary school)	Teachers (elementary school)

Sources: Decennial Census, 1870-1940: Janet M. Hooks, Women's Occupations through Seven Decades (Women's Bureau Bulletin #218, U.S. Department of Labor); U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census: Census of Population, 1960, Detailed Characteristics, U.S. Summary, table 202.